

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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New I-5 Tacoma City Center Off-ramp Opening Saturday

On December 8, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. the Department of Transportation (DOT) will be opening the new northbound off-ramp (exit 133) at the City Center. This is more than one mile south of the old exit. This means the 25, 000 drivers who exit here each day need to be ready to exit sooner, just north of 38th Street and prior to the SR 16 curve.

Motorists are encouraged to drive a little slower to prepare for these changes. There may be some traffic congestion in this area as everyone adjusts to the changes. Remember to stay a safe distance away from the vehicle in front of you; if another vehicle can safely pass between you and the vehicle in front of you, you are at a safe distance. If you see another driver trying to make a lane change, practice common courtesy and allow the driver to change lanes in front you.

Drivers that are unprepared to take the exit and have "missed" their exit should take the next exit. Do not make erratic lane changes to get to the missed exit or back up on the shoulder to take a missed exit. These actions are violations of the law and violators will be cited.

The Washington State Patrol will have troopers patrolling the area making sure motorists are obeying the laws, creating a smoother transition and keeping our highway safe.

This project untangles the weave between SR 16 drivers moving left to get on I-5, and I-5 drivers moving right to get downtown. These conflicting movements have slowed down traffic and contributed to many collisions in the area. Eliminating the weave on this stretch of northbound I-5 is expected to reduce collisions by 75 a year.

The Washington State Patrol asks you to do your part in making this transition a smooth and pleasant experience for all motorists.

(This change will be weather permitting. If we experience heavy rains again, the DOT will not be able to make final changes to the roadway before Saturday. If this happens the opening will be re-scheduled for another date.)

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